



The Holy See

MEETING WITH THE PERSONNEL OF THE HOLY SEE
AND OF THE VATICAN CITY STATE WITH THEIR FAMILIES

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

*Paul VI Audience Hall
Thursday, 22 December 2016*

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We meet again for this beautiful family moment, to exchange Christmas wishes. It is a moment that I greatly appreciate, because it is the occasion for us to come together, everyone, along with your family members, wives and husbands, children, parents, who are often grandparents....

First of all, I would like, with you, to thank the Lord for all his gifts. For it is true that in these days one thinks of Christmas presents, but in reality the One who gives the true gift is He, our Father, who gives us Jesus. Our presents, this beautiful tradition of exchanging presents, should express precisely this: a reflection of the unique gift that is his Son made man and born of the Virgin Mary.

Today we wish to thank God first of all for the gift of work. Work is extremely important, both for the actual person who works and for his or her family. As we give thanks, let us pray for the people and the families, in Italy and throughout the world, who have no work, or else, often, who do work that is undignified, poorly paid, or harmful to health.... We must always thank God for work. And we must be committed, each one with his or her own responsibility, to ensuring that work is dignified, respectful of the person and of the family, and just. Here in the Vatican we have an extra reason to do so, we have the Gospel, and we must follow the guidelines of the Social Doctrine of the Church. Here in the Vatican I do not want there to be work that is out of line with this: no undeclared work, no subterfuge.

Thus, let us all thank the Lord. However, for my part, today I want to thank you for your work. I thank each of you, each one, for the diligence you put forth each day in doing your work and trying

to do it well, even when perhaps you don't feel very well, or there are family concerns.... A good thing about the Vatican is that, being a very small entity, it is possible to perceive it as a whole, with the various tasks that form the whole, and each one is important. The various work sectors are close and connected, we know everyone somewhat; and we feel the satisfaction of seeing a certain order, that things function, with all the limitations, of course, we can and must always improve, but it is good to hear that every sector does its part and the whole functions well for the benefit of all. Here, this is easier, because we are a small entity, but this takes nothing away from the effort and personal merit; and for this I feel moved to thank you.

This year we have lived a special year: it was the Holy Year of Mercy. We too celebrated our Jubilee together, do you remember? The first part here, in this Hall, and then we went together in procession to the Holy Door. This year the Lord poured out his mercy upon us. Did all this grace end with the conclusion of the Jubilee? No! This grace is within us, so that we may make it bear fruit in life each day, whether at home or at work, everywhere.

Christmas reminds us of this: "For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world" (Tit 2:11-12), so says Saint Paul the Apostle. The "grace of God" has "appeared" in Jesus, He is Love, the Love of God incarnate, by the power of the Holy Spirit. We have all received this same Spirit, in Baptism and in Confirmation; but we must invoke him each day, to reawaken the action of the Spirit in us, in order to "live in this world" — also in this little world of the Vatican — "sober, upright, and godly lives".

Dear brothers and sisters, as I thank you, I ask you to convey my special greeting to the children and the elderly members of your families. They are so important, each of them. And [convey] a greeting together with prayers to the sick.

I offer this wish to all: that your hearts may be full of mercy, full of the Jubilee grace that Jesus comes to rekindle in us.

May the Lord bless you and Our Lady protect you.

And before the Nativity scene, remember to pray for me. Thank you.